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## The Texas House of Representatives

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### State Representative Garnet Coleman

#### Dist. 147

Garnet F. Coleman has served in the Texas House of Representatives since 1991. Representing District 147, which includes Third Ward, Fourth Ward, Downtown, Midtown, Sagemont, and the Hobby Airport Area, Representative Coleman has earned a reputation as a diligent leader in areas such as health, economic development, education and welfare reform. Earning support across party lines, Representative Coleman has been an innovator in creating and supporting legislation that not only benefits Houstonians, but all Texans.

Raised in Houston, Representative Coleman attended Howard University in Washington, D.C. and graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of St. Thomas in 1990. He also is a graduate of Harvard University's Senior Executive Program for State and Local Government.

After college, Representative Coleman worked as a Staff Assistant with the 1990 Economic Summit of Industrialized Nations. Since his election as a state representative in 1991, Representative Coleman has taught Urban Politics at the University of St. Thomas and created S.M.A.R.T. Kids, a youth development program. He currently serves as President and Chief Executive Officer of Apartments for America, Inc., and is a co-owner of Peacole Ice Cream. In 1997, he established Coleman Strategies, a business consulting

firm. Representative Coleman's community activities include serving on the board of DePelchin Children's Center, Third Ward Redevelopment Council and Interfaith Ministries.

Representative Coleman serves as vice-chairman of the House Committee on Public Health. Coleman's most significant accomplishments concerning health issues during the 76th Legislative Session include joint authoring legislation that created the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which makes low-cost health insurance available to more than 400,000 children in working families, and authoring the Indigent Health Care Reform Bill, which makes the health care safety net for the uninsured work smarter with limited resources. Related to these issues, Representative Coleman helped to secure funding for CHIP and fought for \$40 million in funding for the health care safety net, including \$16 million targeted for urban hospitals like Ben Taub General Hospital and Riverside General Hospital. Representative Coleman also helped to secure \$54 million in funding for life-saving prescriptions for HIV and AIDS patients in Texas.

Striving to increase economic development in Texas, Representative Coleman has been instrumental in passing legislation regarding Houston's downtown redevelopment. During the 76th Legislative Session, Representative Coleman worked to create two new public improvement districts, the East Downtown Management District and the Midtown Management District, which will spur development in the Chinatown and Midtown areas of the city. Representative Coleman also worked to protect school districts that participate in tax increment reinvestment zones (TIRZs) from being hurt under the public school funding formula, which will help keep these critical redevelopment tools viable. This was especially important for the Houston Independent School District, which participates in several TIRZs.

As a member of the House Committee on Appropriations, Representative Coleman supports higher education in Houston. With the support of the community, Representative Coleman worked diligently during the 76th Legislative Session not only to keep Texas Southern University independent but also to strengthen its foundation for the future by securing \$9.6 million in new funding, including an additional \$100,000 for the Third Ward Redevelopment Council. Representative Coleman also worked to provide opportunities for more students to attend college through his support of \$100 million in state funding for the Toward EXcellence, Access and Success (TEXAS) scholarship program. Part of that funding will go to Representative Coleman's "Teach for Texas" program that offers upper-level college students and working professionals scholarship money in return for a commitment to teach for a certain number of years in an underserved area. Representative

Coleman's efforts also led to increased funding for the University of Houston and the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

Representative Coleman's welfare reform initiatives this session included helping to secure the first increase in the cash grant in 14 years and, for the first time ever, providing back-to-school cash bonuses in August for recipients of cash assistance. Representative Coleman also joint authored legislation to make certain that the children of parents who hit their time limits can remain eligible for Medicaid, and to provide scholarships to child care workers trying to achieve certification. In addition, Representative Coleman worked to increase funding for the Self Sufficiency Fund and Skills Development Fund, both of which provide customized job training to help welfare recipients succeed in the workforce.

Representative Coleman and his wife, Angelique, reside in Houston's University Oaks neighborhood. They have two children, Austin and Evan.

